



Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO)

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THIRD PRE-ELECTION ENVIRONMENT OBSERVATION STATEMENT

Introduction

The Coalition of Domestic Election Observers (CODEO) is pleased to release its third pre-election observation report, which captures key observations of the pre-election environment during the month of November 2020, ahead of the December 7, 2020 presidential and parliamentary elections of Ghana. The report is based on weekly reports filed by 65 Long-Term Observers (LTOs) deployed across 65 selected constituencies throughout the country. The observers have been monitoring the general electoral and political environment including the activities of key election stakeholders such as the Electoral Commission (EC), the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), political parties, the security agencies, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and religious and traditional leaders. Below are key findings from CODEO's observation during the period.

Summary of Findings:

- Civic and voter education activities have been intensified by the NCCE and the EC across the observed constituencies.
- COVID-19 health and safety protocols were not adhered to during some political party activities.
- Education remains the main policy issue discussed at campaign activities by the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP).

Main Findings

Preparatory Activities by State and Non-State Actors

CODEO's Long Term Observer reports indicated a significant increase in the preparatory activities by the EC towards the conduct of the 2020 Presidential and Parliamentary elections. Specifically, CODEO's LTOs reported observing/hearing the Electoral Commission undertake various District IPAC meetings, recruitment and training of its election staff. Observer reports also showed intensified voter/civic education by the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) across the observed constituencies. Through community meetings and the use of radio programs, NCCE was observed educating citizens on their right, responsibilities and duties before, during and after the December 7 elections.

NCCE, in partnership with local radio stations, were observed to have organized inter-party dialogues among parliamentary candidates across some of the observed constituencies. For instance, NCCE in partnership with the interparty dialogue committee in Builsa North constituency of the Upper East region organized an interparty forum for all parties and stakeholders on November 4, 2020. They also organized similar inter-party forums in most of the observed constituencies for the parliamentary candidates to engage with their constituents. These forums were also used to educate the youth to participate in the elections and urge them to refrain from

any act of electoral violence. On November 27, 2020, the inter-party dialogue committee also had a film show on the effects of electoral violence in the Odododiodioo constituency in the Greater Accra region.

With regards to the preparatory activities by the security agencies ahead of the elections, four in 10 Observers indicated they either observed or heard of a DISEC or REGSEC meetings. On November 4, 2020, the district security election task force organized an inter-party forum for all parties and stakeholders, including Religious and Traditional Leaders in the Builsa North constituency of the Upper East region. This was to assure the parties that the security was prepared to discharge its duties before, during and after the election.

Campaigning Activities by Political Parties

CODEO LTOs report indicated intensified campaign activities by the NDCongress and the NPP across the observed constituencies. Observer reports also showed that the Ghana Union Movement (GUM) is gaining some visibility with its campaign activities during the period. Campaign activities such as rallies, house-to-house and party marches have significantly increased in November.

On November 2, 2020, the flagbearer of NDC toured the Dome-Kwabinya constituency, while the NPP women's wing organized a house-to-house campaign activity to send their messages to the electorates of the constituency. Education, unemployment and the economy remain the main policy issues raised or discussed by the NPP and the NDC at the campaign activities observed. Generally, LTO's reported a peaceful election campaigning environment in the observed constituencies. However, there were few instances of party paraphernalia destructions. For instance, on November 2, 2020, at Manso Nkran in the Manso Adubia constituency, in the Ashanti region, an unidentified group destroyed a mounted billboard of the NDC parliamentary candidate.

Adherence to COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols

Although Ghana's COVID-19 case count is on the rise, CODEO observer report indicated a total disregard for social distancing, wearing of nose masks and hand washing during campaign and other stakeholders' activities. For instance, on November 26, 2020. A case in point is the flagbearer of the NPP's tour to Dome market, Haatso and Ashongman in the Dome-Kwabinya constituency in the Greater Accra region. Party sympathizers were observed to have ignored all the health and safety protocols, with the exception of a few party leaders who were seen in nose masks. Also, at the Buem constituency, during a parliamentary aspirant debate, organized by the NCCE on November 27, 2020, party supporters were observed to have violated all the COVID 19 safety protocols.

In the Awutu Senya East constituency in the central region, there was also disregard for social distancing and wearing of masks during a party march through the principal street of Kasoa organized by the flagbearer of the Ghana Union Movement.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

- The Coalition, once again, reminds all political parties, party supporters, the Electoral Commission and all stakeholders to be mindful of the risks posed by the COVID-19 and ensure adherence to all relevant health and safety protocols to prevent the spread of the virus.
- CODEO further entreats the NCCE, the Electoral Commission and all stakeholders to sustain voter/civic and peace education.
- CODEO also urges political parties to sensitize their supporters to refrain from acts that may contribute to electoral violence.

CODEO continues to observe the pre-election environment and will share its findings with the public. CODEO's long-term observation is made possible with the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Signed:



**Albert Arhin,
National Coordinator, CODEO**

Dated: Sunday, December 06, 2020

**APPENDIX:
LIST OF CONSTITUENCIES FOR CODEO LONG-TERM OBSERVATION**

S/N	Region	Constituency	34	Central	Cape Coast South
1.	Ashanti	Nsuta Kwamang	35.	Central	Assin North
2.	Ashanti	New Edubiase	36.	Central	Awutu Senya East
3.	Ashanti	Suame	37	Central	Effutu
4.	Ashanti	Sekyere Afram Plains	38	Central	Agona East
5.	Ashanti	Ahafo Ano South East	39	Central	Gomoa West
6.	Ashanti	Asawase	40	Eastern	Abuakwa North
7.	Ashanti	Bekwai	41	Eastern	Nkawkaw
8.	Ashanti	Manso Edubia	42	Eastern	Akwatia
9.	Ashanti	Offinso North	43	Eastern	New Juaben South
10.	Ashanti	Subin	44	Eastern	Asuogyaman
11.	Ahafo	Asunafo South	45	Eastern	Upper Manya Krobo
12.	Bono East	Techiman South	46	Eastern	Fanteakwa North
13.	Bono East	Pru West	47	Greater Accra	Weija/Gbawe
14.	Bono	Jaman North	48	Greater Accra	Dome/Kwabanya
15.	Bono	Sunyani West	49	Greater Accra	Ningo/Prampram
16.	Bono	Banda	50	Greater Accra	Odododiodio
17.	Bono	Dormaa West	51	Greater Accra	Ledzokuku
18.	Northern	Tamale Central	52	Greater Accra	Ayawaso East
19.	Northern	Savelugu	53	Greater Accra	Ablekuma South
20.	Northern	Karaga	54	Greater Accra	Ayawaso West Wuogon
21.	Northern	Tamale North	55	Volta	Adaklu
22.	Savannah	Salaga North	56	Volta	Ketu South
23.	North East	Walewale	57	Volta	Akatsi South
24.	North East	Yunyoo	58	Volta	South Dayi
25.	Upper East	Bongo	59	Volta	South Tongu
26.	Upper East	Builsa North	60	Oti	Buem
27.	Upper East	Builsa South	61	Oti	Nkwanta North
28.	Upper East	Zebilla (Bawku West)	62	Western	Jomoro
29.	Upper West	Sissala West	63	Western	Sekondi
30.	Upper West	Jirapa	64	Western	Ellembele
31.	Upper West	Wa East	65	Western	Essikadu-Ketan
32.	Western North	Bibiani-Anhwiaso Bekwai			

33.	Western North	Juabeso
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